



King County Board of Ethics
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KING COUNTY BOARD OF ETHICS MEETING NOTICE ANNUAL RETREAT

- When:** Saturday, January 17, 2004
8:30 a.m. -- 12:00 noon
- Where:** Horizon House
900 University Street, conference room
Seattle, WA 98101
- Notes:** **Please Note Change of Usual Day, Time and Location**
For directions or questions, please contact the ethics office

AGENDA

- 8:30 a.m. Call to Order; Approval of Agenda
- 8:35 a.m. Introductions
- 8:40 a.m. Approval of December 15, 2003, meeting minutes
- 8:45 a.m. Review 2003 Annual Report
- 9:15 a.m. Establish 2004 Mission and Goals
- 9:30 a.m. 2004 Initiatives
- 10:00 a.m. **Break**
- 10:15 a.m. Collaborative Working Relationships with City and State Agencies. Guests Brian Malarky, Executive Director, Executive Ethics Board for Washington State and Harley Anders, Executive Director, Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission
- 12:00 p.m. Adjourn

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ALTERNATE FORMATS AVAILABLE



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Minutes of the January 17, 2004, Meeting of the King County Board of Ethics

The January 17, 2004, meeting and annual retreat of the King County Board of Ethics was called to order by Chair Price Spratlen at 8:35 a.m. Board members in attendance were:

Dr. Lois Price Spratlen, Chair
Mr. Roland H. Carlson
Dr. Margaret T. Gordon
Rev. Paul F. Pruitt
Mr. Jerry Saltzman

Others in attendance:

Ms. Catherine A. Clemens, Administrator, King County Board of Ethics
Mr. James J. Buck, Administrative Services Manager, Department of Executive Services
Mr. Brian Malarky, Executive Director, Washington State Executive Ethics Board
Mr. Harley Anders, Interim Executive Director, Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission

1. *Approval of Agenda.* Mr. Saltzman moved and Rev. Pruitt seconded that the board approve the proposed agenda. The board unanimously adopted the motion.

Chair Price Spratlen expressed appreciation on behalf of the board to Rev. Pruitt for again making the retreat location possible. She asked for introductions from all those present.

2. *Approval of Meeting Minutes of December 15, 2003.* Rev. Pruitt moved and Dr. Gordon seconded that the board approve the December 15, 2003, meeting minutes. The board unanimously adopted the motion and the minutes were approved.

Mr. Buck arrived at 8:47 a.m.

3. *Review 2003 Annual Report.* Ms. Clemens briefed the board and noted the highlights of achievements by the board and staff this year. The five highlights included: 1) the administrator conducted ethics training to over 1,780 employees affected by the ethics code, an increase of 71% over the previous year; 2) the King County Council unanimously passed, and the executive signed into law, an amendment to the post-employment provision proposed by the ethics board; 3) under direction of the board, the administrator issued 69 written staff informational responses and 133 ethics-related telephone inquiries; 4) by the April 15th deadline, the financial disclosure program for employees and elected officials achieved 100% compliance; board and commission members achieved 99% compliance; and 5) the board launched a county-wide awareness campaign to inform county leadership and employees of the code, the board and office.

Chair Price Spratlen acknowledged these achievements, particularly the passage of the post employment amendment that required several years of concentrated work. Ms. Clemens walked the board through the report; the document was organized in order of the board's five goals, beginning with training and education. Dr. Gordon noted that through education, the board is achieving its goal of creating a reputation for accessibility and assistance instead of one of apprehension or fear. The chair stated that Dr. Gordon's comment reflected those

made by the executive including statements that he has seen the benefits of this change. Rev. Pruitt stated that the board laid the groundwork for this change over the past several years which allowed it to reach this goal today. Mr. Carlson agreed and stated his belief that ethics in county government is now a positive force and not seen as a police action. During the discussion on technology and the ethics web site as educative tools, the board expressed its desire to track use of the site to measure its importance to county employees. Ms. Clemens stated that she planned to maintain such records.

During review of the report under the second goal, a systematic review of the ethics code, Chair Price Spratlen stated she felt the review of gift laws to be important, especially in light of recent issues and violations. Both Rev. Pruitt and Mr. Carlson commented on the issue of gifts for elected officials based on their experiences and observations when they served as Washington State legislators.

Following complete review of the report, Mr. Carlson moved and Dr. Gordon seconded that the 2003 Annual Report be approved; the board unanimously adopted the report. The chair expressed her appreciation to the administrator for her role in the achievements of 2003.

At 9:30 a.m., Chair Price Spratlen requested a five-minute meeting adjournment. At 9:43 a.m., the board reconvened and resumed its meeting.

Establish 2004 Mission and Goals. The board reviewed the 2003 mission and goals and discussed changes, if any, for 2004.

Regarding Goal I, training and education, the board determined it would continue meeting with new councilmembers and would appear before the Committee of the Whole, as suggested by two councilmembers during individual meetings in 2003. Mr. Saltzman volunteered to accompany the chair during her meeting with newly elected Councilmember Steve Hammond. The chair informed the board of her recent meeting with new Councilmember Bob Ferguson and his questions regarding acceptance of gifts. She noted that Ms. Clemens sent a follow-up letter outlining the county's gift laws and board advisory opinions on the issue.

During discussion of Goal II, a systematic review of the ethics code, the chair asked Ms. Clemens which issues receive the most frequent inquiries. Ms. Clemens, referring to the annual report, reported on the issues in order of numbers of requests: use of county resources and funds, potential conflict of interest for employees board and commission members, post-employment restrictions, outside employment restrictions, solicitation by employees of other county employees or businesses located in the county, acceptance of gifts or things of value, and providing referrals or testimonials. Chair Price Spratlen and Mr. Carlson agreed that the pattern of fewer opinions and increased staff information responses is a positive change and indicates that the existing opinions cover most issues of inquiry.

Since Mr. Marlarky and Mr. Anders arrived at 9:52 a.m., the chair moved directly into the related agenda item.

Collaborative Working Relationships with City and State Agencies. Mr. Marlarky and Mr. Anders introduced themselves. Mr. Marlarky discussed the challenges faced by his agency including limited staffing resources, an increase on requests for opinions, and a jurisdiction of 150,000, including the University of Washington. Issues of note for his agency include outside contracting relative to particular issues related to state employees, and policy reviews brought to the commission by state agencies seeking approval.

Mr. Anders discussed issues affecting the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission including frequent staff changes during a year marked by four city council members cited for prohibited gift acceptance, and four city magistrates cited for misuse of city resources.

Attendees discussed similarities and differences in the gifts laws of the three jurisdictions. The chair noted that it might not be possible to decide whether or not to work for one consistent gift law, but asked if schedules over the coming year would allow exploration. Mr. Malarky noted that going to the state legislature with changes could be problematic; Mr. Anders stated that the city is reluctant to rewrite the law since laws appropriate for the larger state jurisdiction might not work for Seattle. Mr. Malarky suggested one area of common review might be use of public resources for political activities. Chair Price Spratlen stated the board would consider this in relation to the year's scope of work. Dr. Gordon suggested the jurisdictions create a statement related to areas of commonality with a goal of educating the public and increasing the public's trust in government; she offered to draft a one-page statement. Mr. Saltzman volunteered to assist with the drafting. Mr. Carlson moved that the board, led by Dr. Gordon and Mr. Saltzman, draft a statement of common principles reflecting shared values and code provisions within the three jurisdictions. Rev. Pruitt seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. The administrator stated she will provide support and keep all parties, including Mr. Malarky and Mr. Anders, informed of the progress.

The board thanked Mr. Malarky and Mr. Anders for attending and for their valuable role in the discussion. Mr. Malarky and Mr. Anders left the meeting at 11:06 a.m.

The board returned to its discussion of the 2004 mission and goals. Following review and discussion of goals III, IV, V—timely advice and guidance, conduct annual disclosure programs, and collaboration with other ethics agencies, respectively—Mr. Saltzman moved, and Mr. Carlson seconded, that the board accept the 2004 Mission and Goals as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

2004 Initiatives. Ms. Clemens briefed the board and reviewed with it a list of initiatives under consideration for 2004. Following review and discussion, all present voted, placing items in order of importance. The outcome order was the awareness campaign, meetings with the executive and councilmembers, the annual reception for county leadership, a new event for board and commission chairs, and collaborative working relationships with other jurisdictions. Board members also suggested other public education efforts including a television forum featuring a panel discussion with members from the three jurisdictions (on TVW or KCTS), and a series of articles on ethics and public trust. The board determined that further discussion was needed and determined that the matter should be placed on the February meeting agenda.

Chair Price Spratlen thanked all members, the administrator, and Mr. Buck for attending the retreat.

Mr. Saltzman moved and Rev. Pruitt seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. The board unanimously approved the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Approved this 17th day of February, 2004, by the King County Board of Ethics.

Signed for the Board: _____
Dr. Lois Price Spratlen, Chair